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MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 3, 2016/2017

BCT1024 – CRITICAL THINKING AND APPLICATION IN MANAGEMENT (All sections / Groups)

30th MAY 2017
2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS:

1. This question paper consists of **TWO** parts and **12** pages (excluding the cover page).
2. Answer **ALL** questions.
 - Part A : Multiple Choice Questions (40 marks)
 - Part B : Analytical questions
 - Question 1: Problem solving (20 marks)
 - Question 2: Argument composition (20 marks)
 - Question 3: Fallacy identification (10 marks)
 - Question 4: Media evaluation (10 marks)
3. The total mark for this paper is 100 marks. This final examination will contribute 50% toward your grade in this course.

PART A: MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (40 MARKS)

Answer ALL questions. Mark your answers on the OMR sheet.

1. Which of the following is/are TRUE about critical thinking?
 - I. Critical thinking requires skepticism because it allows us to hold open the possibility that what we know at a given time may be only part of the picture.
 - II. Critical thinking requires the ability to manage emotions such as anger, frustration and anxiety.
 - III. Critical thinking helps us generate new ideas.
 - IV. Critical thinking helps us avoid criticism.
 - a. I and II
 - b. II and III
 - c. III and IV
 - d. IV only

2. Sophia closes the door to her office and sits at her desk thinking hard. "This is such a serious problem," she tells herself. "I'm glad I finally figured it out the problem statement. But now I must ask myself, 'Does this problem pose a threat?..... to our people?.....to our organization?....to the community? That's one of the most important question I have to answer before I can go on to generate a list of possible solutions'".

Right at this moment, which of the following is true about Sophia's situation?

- a. She is in Stage Four of the problem-solving process.
 - b. She is engaging in fallacy identification.
 - c. She is using Kepner-Tregoe analysis.
 - d. She is experiencing wishful thinking.
3. Only men can become professional race car drivers. Your sister obviously is not a man. Therefore, she is not a professional race car driver.

The above argument is

- a. Inductive.....strong
 - b. Inductive.....weak
 - c. Deductive... valid
 - d. Deductive....invalid

Continued....

4. Mary, Tan, Nadia and Leela are having a discussion about organizing a surprise party for Penny's birthday. After a short discussion, it was suggested by Leela that they will each contribute RM50 for a dinner at TGIF restaurant. During the discussion, Mary has a different idea. She thought contributing RM50 for the party is not a wise decision since all of them are college students with limited budget. Mary however kept quiet. She thought to herself, "If everyone else agrees then my thoughts to the contrary must be wrong." Tan quickly came up with the statement, "I see we all agree so it's decided then.....dinner at TGIF. And each of us contribute RM50"

Which barrier to critical thinking occurs in the above scenario?

- a. Egocentrism
 - b. Fair-mindedness
 - c. Conformism
 - d. Bias
5. Natasha's last six babies were very large and now she's pregnant again. Therefore, probably this new baby will be very large.

The above argument is:

- a. Deductive.....Valid
 - b. Deductive.....Invalid
 - c. Inductive.....weak
 - d. Inductive.....strong
6. Zack is the owner of a small business employing 50 workers. He is trying to come up with ideas on how he can get the employees to reduce company's expenditure and thus cut cost for the company. Zack has decided to generate ideas by using free association technique. What is the first step Zack should take in employing the technique *free association*?
- a. Compare the pros and cons of employees reducing company expenditure.
 - b. Pose the question "how can I get my employees to waste money?"
 - c. Pose the question "If I were Tony Fernandez, the CEO of AirAsia, what would I do to get my employees to reduce expenditure?"
 - d. Jot the word 'stone' on the whiteboard and try to think of as many other words related to the word 'stone'. Keep writing until an idea emerges.

Continued....

7. The most important question(s) to ask in assessing the logic of an argument is:
- I. If the argument is deductive, does the conclusion follow necessarily from the premises?
 - II. Are the premises relevant to the conclusion?
 - III. Are the premises, if true, sufficient to support the conclusion?
- a. I only
 - b. II only
 - c. II and III
 - d. I, II and III

Question 8 is based on the following passage:

Astrology is having a resurgence not only because of mystical trends that ebb and flow over the years, but also because of the superabundance of astrological material easily accessible everywhere. (J.V. Stewart, *Astrology: What's Really in the Stars?* 1996)

8. The above passage is a/an:
- a. argument; conclusion: There is a superabundance of astrological material everywhere.
 - b. argument; conclusion: Astrology is having a resurgence.
 - c. nonargument; explanation
 - d. nonargument; description
9. To write a good argument, the following are the supporting statements that you could use to support your premise(s)
- I. Evidence
 - II. Persuasive definition
 - III. Anecdote
 - IV. Ad populum appeal to authority
- a. I and II
 - b. I and III
 - c. I, II and III
 - d. I, III and IV

Continued....

10. Which of the following sentences would qualify as a “statement”?
- Keep quiet!
 - Don’t you realize that learning cooking is essential in life?
 - Why do I feel tired all the time?
 - Let’s invite him to our house.

Question 11 is based on the following passage

I hope the government can make it impossible for construction companies to hire foreign workers. One only needs to look at the living quarters of construction workers to see why locals are not keen to take up jobs in the industry.

If one were to pass by a construction site, one would be appalled at the living conditions. There are also the low wages. It looks like no effort had been taken to improve the working conditions of the workers. Human rights groups should look out for the welfare of these workers.

It is no wonder that locals shun jobs at construction sites. Some companies try to make maximum profit by using cheap labour and not make any effort to improve wages or working conditions. It looks like our pro-business policy is being taken advantage of.

The price of properties in Malaysia is similar to that in developed countries even though the price of land is cheaper. But the workmanship of some of the houses is poor. The materials are of low quality and wages ridiculously low.

Safety standards at construction sites are also sometimes nil.

Jobs should also be created for Malaysians, not foreigners alone. Efforts must be made to improve the working conditions and wages through strict enforcement.

Source: Living quarters of foreign workers are appalling - Letters to the Editor - New Straits Times <http://www2.nst.com.my/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/living-quarters-of-foreign-workers-are-appalling-1.615649#ixzz36wVcJSkM>

11. From the above argument, what would be the **implicit conclusion**?

- Malaysian government should ban construction companies from hiring foreign workers.
- Locals would take up jobs in the construction industry if the wages and working conditions provided to them are not appalling.
- Malaysia’s pro-business policy is being taken advantage by the foreign workers.
- Strict enforcement is not effective in improving the working conditions and wages of the workers in construction industry.

Continued....

12. "How could the average person be so gullible to throw their money away in slot machines? Think about it. This money could be used for your family for things that they need".

Which of the following describe the preceding passage?

- I. Argument; conclusion: *This money could be used for your family for the things that they need.*
- II. Argument; premise: *How could the average person be so gullible to throw their money away in slot machines?*
- III. Argument; premise: *Think about it.*
- IV. Non-argument.

- a. I and II
- b. I and III
- c. I, II and III
- d. IV only

13. An advertisement carries the following message:

"A caring mother is one who uses Soft-as-snow brand disposable diapers"

The above statement contains:

- I. Emotive language
- II. Dysphemism
- III. Weasel words
- IV. Fine print disclaimer
- V. Persuasive definition
- VI. Lexical definition

- a. I and III
- b. II and IV
- c. I and V
- d. III and VI

14. The definition "*Sport* means an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess and often of a competitive nature, such as racing, baseball, tennis, golf, bowling, etc." is an example of a :

- a. stipulative definition.
- b. persuasive definition.
- c. precisising definition.
- d. lexical definition.

Continued....

15. Which of the following sentences does NOT contain an interrogative question?

- a. I am currently breast feeding my one-week-old newborn baby. I notice that he has bowel movements about five to six times a day. Is the frequency of his bowel movements normal for a breastfed baby?
- b. My mother started to give honey diluted in water (about 5 oz a day) to my six month old son. She said, it is traditionally believed to be good for baby's health. But, I am not too sure about this. How will it affect my baby?
- c. Do you know that almost every baby is affected by nappy rash at sometime during the early stages of their lives? Prevention is the smart choice.
- d. My son is two years old and he loves to bite his finger nails and often puts things into his mouth. Is this just a common behavior at his age that he will grow out of? Or is this an indication that he might have some health problems?

16. A political candidate running for an election called for the resignation of his opponent, stating that when there is a cancer on the government, the cancer must be cut out.

The above is an example of the use of

- a. Figurative analogy
- b. Literal analogy
- c. Semantic ambiguity
- d. Syllogism

17. Professor Cooper: John, it's clear you didn't study hard for this test. This was a very straightforward test, and you failed every section.

John: But I did study hard! I spent over an hour last night studying for this test.

John's statement lacks precision because it contains

- a. Dysphemism.
- b. Overgenerality.
- c. Syntactical Ambiguity.
- d. Euphemism.

Continued....

18. Raj drives a beat-up old Volkswagen, lives in a cheap apartment, and wears shabby clothes. It's a good bet that Raj does not have much money.

Which of the following if TRUE about the above passage?

- I. The argument is valid because the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises
 - II. The argument is invalid because the conclusion follows probably from the premises
 - III. It is an inductive argument.
 - IV. It is NOT an argument
- a. I and III
 - b. II and III
 - c. III only
 - d. IV only

19. Mr. Nazri taught three students from Japan last trimester, and all of them were A students.

So, all students from Japan must be A students.

- I. This is an inductive argument.
 - II. This is a weak argument because the sample is small.
 - III. This is an example of sweeping generalization.
- a. I and II
 - b. I and III
 - c. II and III
 - d. I, II and III

Continued....

Question 20 refers to the following two images



20. The above two images are advertisements of watches for men.
Which advertising ploys appear in both advertisements?

- I. humor
 - II. emotive language
 - III. celebrity endorsement
 - IV. anxiety ad
-
- a. I and III
 - b. II and III
 - c. II and IV
 - d. I and IV

Continued....

PART B: ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS**Question 1: PROBLEM SOLVING (20 MARKS)**

Instruction: Read the following article and answer the questions:

Beware of bullies in workplace

Bullying does not only happen among children but also grown-ups. In adults, being bullied at work can be detrimental to their career and in the long term, cause mental stress. Being excluded from on-the-job social events, co-workers excusing themselves from the work area when you come in, receiving the “silent treatment” or having your presentations ignored are examples of adult bullying. The bully will attempt to slander his victim by turning his associates against him. He will spread rumours of the victim’s inability to perform simple tasks.

A tormenting supervisor may set the victim up for a fall, by giving him assignments that he knows the victim won’t be able to do and then pounce on his failure. Bullying can sometimes be so subtle that the victim won’t even realise that he is being bullied, and neither will his colleagues.

Bullying among staff is also closely linked to an “unhappy” environment. The adult bully is often charming. He is adept at making his actions believable. But there are signs that behind the sweet talk, all may not be well. These include random and impulsive decision-making, obsession with conformity and procedures, the inability to distinguish between important and trivial matters, and pettiness.

Bullying is about power. Bullies want control of their victim and their environment. Their main instrument of control is criticism. A colleague may focus on alleged under-performance. A manager may criticize everything from professional conduct to appearance. To correct the alleged failing, the victim jumps through more hoops, but the harder the victim works, and the more he or she achieves, the greater the bully’s insecurity. This damaging cycle often ends in the victim facing disciplinary action or a nervous breakdown, or both.

In a bullying workplace, colleagues are often afraid to stand up for the victim in case they become targets themselves. Don’t take bullying lightly. It can last for years, with victims continuing to do their job under increasingly stressful circumstances.

(Excerpted, with changes from : <http://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/04/139797/beware-bullies-workplace>)

Continued...

Questions:

- a. Formulate a problem statement by identifying the expectation, reality and gap which exist in the issue above. (2 marks)
- b. Explain how you would use the technique *Six Thinking Hats* to analyze the problem. (12 marks)
- c. Describe how you would use the SCAMPER technique to generate solutions to the problem. Identify THREE possible solutions from this technique. (6 marks)

Question 2: ARGUMENT COMPOSITION (20 MARKS)

Mexican billionaire tycoon, Carlos Slim, has called for the introduction of a three-day working week, offset by longer hours and a later retirement, as a way to improve people's quality of life and create a more productive labour force. Slim made the comments when speaking to a business conference in Paraguay, suggesting that the workforce could be spread over a full week, with employees working up to 10 or 11 hours a day.

"With three work days a week, we would have more time to relax; for quality of life," the Financial Times reports Slim saying.

"Having four days [off] would be very important to generate new entertainment activities and other ways of being occupied," Slim said. He said current retirement ages come from a time of lower life expectancies, and should rise to 70 or 75.

Some small companies in Australia have instigated a four-day week flexible workplace policy, and advocates cite improvements in employee health and environmental impact as possible benefits.

<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/jul/21/carlos-slim-calls-for-three-day-working-week-to-improve-quality-of-life>

Continued...

Question:

Should Malaysian companies accept the idea as proposed by Mr. Carlos Slim? What is your stand on this issue?

Write an argumentative essay to state your stand.

Your argument must contain the following “parts”. Label each part with the code indicated below. (That is, after the premises you use, write ‘P1’ and ‘P2’; after your anecdote, write “ANE”; etc.)

Include each of the following in your argument:

<u>Part of the argument</u>	<u>label</u>	<u>marks</u>
Conclusion/Main claim	[C]	2 marks
Two premises	[P1], [P2]	3 marks each (total 6)
A supporting argument which contains a RHETORICAL QUESTION to support P1	[RHE]	4 marks
An anecdote to support P2	[ANE]	4 marks
An assumption on which the conclusion is based	[ASP]	4 marks

Question 3: FALLACY IDENTIFICATION (10 MARKS)

Read the following arguments. In order to answer, you do not have to copy the questions. Just write down the name of the fallacy that applies in each argument.

For example:

“Anas is kind. He must be hard working too”.

Answer: **Sweeping generalization**

- a. A couple of weeks ago, I received a chain letter that said bad luck would come my way if I did not send the letter on to at least 10 people I knew. I mumbled something about superstitious nonsense and threw the letter away. Bad move! The very next day I was attacked by a dog, got dumped by my girlfriend, and was fired from my job. Once is enough. You can bet that next time I get a chain letter, I will do exactly what it says.

The fallacy in the above argument is: _____

Continued....

- b. "Spending a great deal of money to provide medical care for elderly people is like wasting money on a car. When a car is all worn out, needs a new engine, transmission, and body work, it's just better to junk it. The same goes for people".
The fallacy in the above argument is : _____
- c. Bill: "I think that Jane did a great job this year. I'm going to nominate her for the award."
Dave: "Have you forgotten last year? Remember that she didn't nominate you last year."
Bill: "You're right. I'm not going to nominate her."
Dave has committed which fallacy? _____
- d. 80-year-old Bill Tucker has asked to be released from prison because he is old, ill, and dying of brain cancer. Unfortunately, Mr. Tucker's request will have to be denied. If we release Mr. Tucker, we would have to release prisoners that are even less deserving than he is. Eventually, any prisoner with a gastric problem or asthma could successfully petition for early release.
The fallacy in the above argument is: _____
- e. We are all going to submit a letter to the senior manager to complain about the new work schedule that was implemented this month. Since you are one of the members of our team, we are counting on you to add signature to the letter. After all we must all support each other during times like this, mustn't we?
The fallacy in the above argument is : _____

Question 4: MEDIA (10 MARKS)

The news media employ a number of techniques to exaggerate the importance of some stories and to play down others. Often this techniques result in distortion of reality (Basham, 2013).

Describe FIVE (5) of these techniques. Highlight your answer with suitable examples.

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